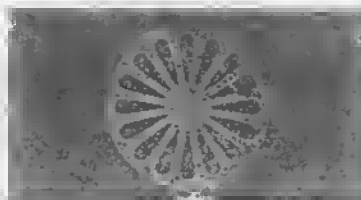


The Gypsy Council

OPRE



ROMA

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for Education, Culture, Welfare and Civil Rights

Affiliated to the International Romani Union

R.I.J

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Reply to
Grattan Puxon
1 John Harper St
Colchester CO1 1RP

HORSMONDEN HORSE FAIR

Dear Sir,

25 August 2000

You will, I presume, already have seen our our letters addressed to the Home Secretary, Mr Jack Straw.

at 5pm 29th August

We now write to inform you that a meeting will be taking place at Ashford Police Station between Horsmonden Parish Council Chairman Mr Neil Robins, senior police officers including Superintendent Prior and representatives of the Gypsy Council, Romany Guild and Romany Rights Association, accompanied by the Chairman of the National Civil Rights Association Mr Glover.

Chief Insp Frayne has already indicated police approval for the proposed ROMANY CARNIVAL PARADE through Horsmonden on Sunday, 10th September (the day of the Fair). The meeting is to discuss the terms and conditions for this, use of horsedrawn vehicles, number of participants, stewards and so on.

Our patron Mr David Essex will lead the parade, and other musicians will be performing, giving a goodwill atmosphere to the event which we hope will create yet more community support for the continuation of the Fair next year.

In light of this development, we believe it would help to lower tension if the Home Office would put on hold any decision regarding the giving of consent for the Order sought by Tunbridge Wells Council to in effect ban the Fair.

We are already agreeing to no trading, that is horse trading and stalls, taking place on the Green this year. In any case, the holding of the Parade provides a perfectly legitimate reason for Romanies to enter the village, either to participate or watch, and the Order therefore could at most apply only to a "trespassory assembly" on the Green. And we have agreed not to use the Green without permission of the Parish Council (we are asking them at the meeting on Tuesday for permission for a community picnic there).

We are also looking for a location for a public meeting, out of doors or in a building. Again we are asking the Parish